

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-5 have been indicated as allowed.

Claims 8, 11, 14 and 21-23 have been objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

Claim 6 has been amended to include the limitations of objected to dependent claim 8 (now canceled). Amended claim 6 is now in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Claim 11 has been amended to include the limitations of base claim 6 and intervening claim 10. Amended claim 11 is now in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Claim 14 has been amended to include the limitations of base claim 12. Amended claim 14 is now in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Claim 21 has been amended to include the limitations of base claim 17 and intervening claim 20. Amended claim 21 is now in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Claim 22 has been amended to include the limitations of base claim 17. Amended claim 22 is now in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Claim 23 has been amended to include the limitations of base claim 17. Amended claim 23 is now in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Claims 6-7, 9-10, 12-13, and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hoang.

With respect to claim 17, Applicants note that the Examiner has indicated that claim 1 is patentable over the art because the art fails to teach or suggest having a program load circuit that is connected in parallel with a current sink. Applicants have amended claim 17 to place claim 17 in condition for allowance. The amendments to claim 17 recite “a current sinking conduction-to-ground path for each matrix column, each path being connected in parallel with the program load circuit and enabled when its associated matrix column is not selected during the programming operation.” Applicants respectfully submit that claim 17 is allowable over the prior art for at least the same reasons as allowed claim 1 (see, also amended claim 6).

Turning now to claim 12, Applicants have amended the claim to correct a grammatical issue and further amended the claim to recite that the bypass path circuit for each bit line is coupled in parallel with the column programming circuit between the programming voltage source and ground. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claim 12 place the claim in condition for allowance. Claim 12, with its recitation of the parallel coupling of the bypass path circuit and column programming circuit, is allowable over the prior art for at least the same reasons as allowed claim 1 and claim 17 (discussed above).

CUSTOMER NO. 23932

PATENT APPLICATION  
Docket No. 61181-13USPX

In view of the above, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance, and such a Notice is respectfully requested.

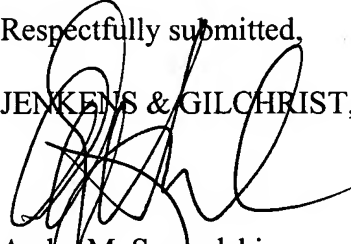
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Respectfully submitted,

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